

UPDATE

Types of Treatments for Prostate Cancer

Radical Prostatectomy

The entire prostate gland and some tissue around it are removed. This surgery is done only if it appears that the cancer has not spread outside the prostate.

Transurethral Resection of the Prostate (TURP)

Is used for men who can't have a radical prostatectomy for some reason. It may be done to relieve symptoms before other treatments begin. It is not done to cure the disease or to remove all the cancer. During the operation, a tool with a small loop of wire on the end is placed inside the prostate through the urethra. The wire is heated and it cuts out the cancerous tissue.

Cryosurgery

Is used to treat localized prostate cancer by freezing the cells with a metal probe.

Radiation Therapy

Radiation therapy is treatment with high-energy rays to kill or shrink cancer cells. The radiation may come from outside the body (external radiation) or from radioactive materials placed directly in the tumor (internal or implant radiation) often called "seeding".

Hormone Therapy

Hormone therapy is often used in men for whom other treatments such as surgery or radiation may not be good options. It is also used for men whose cancer has spread to other parts of the body or has come back after earlier treatment.

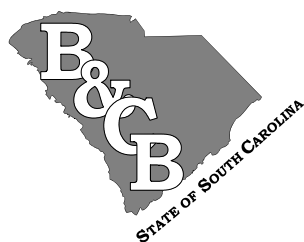
Chemotherapy

Is the use of anticancer drugs injected into a vein or given by mouth. These drugs enter the bloodstream and reach throughout the body, making the treatment useful for cancers that have spread to distant organs.

Expectant Therapy

While watching and waiting is not an active treatment, it may be a good choice for some men. Your doctor may suggest a watch and wait approach if your cancer is small and contained within one area of the prostate, is expected to grow slowly and is not causing any symptoms.

If you are facing difficult decisions about prostate cancer treatment, it might help to consider your options in the context of your age, your general health, your goals for treatment, and your views regarding side effects. No single course of action is right for every man. If possible get a second opinion before you choose your treatment option.



STATE HEALTH PLAN PREVENTION PARTNERS
South Carolina Budget and Control Board
Employee Insurance Program
August 2002

